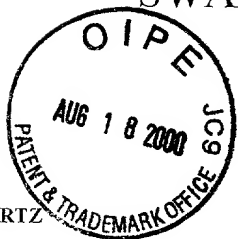


08-18-00

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August 16, 2000

U S. Commissioner of Patents
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Washington, DC 20231

RE: Our File No.: 992070.01

Dear Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing is the patent application of:

Inventors: CLIFFORD BRAUN
DEREK WOODKE

for: Invention: TREE STAND

Enclosed are:

- (1) 10 sheets of drawings.
- (2) Declaration, Petition and Power of Attorney.
- (3) Verified Statement to establish small entity
status under 37 CFR 1.9 and 37 CFR 1.27.
- (4) Information Disclosure Statement.
- (5) Assignment.

The filing fee has been calculated as follows:

Basic fee	\$ 345.00
Total claims - 3 x \$9.00	\$ 27.00
Independent claims - 2 x \$39.00	\$ 78.00
Assignment	\$ 40.00
Total Fee	\$ 490.00



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U.S. Commissioner of Patents
August 16, 2000
Page Two

Our check in the amount of \$490 is enclosed to cover the filing fee. Kindly return the enclosed postcard at your early convenience.

Yours very truly,

SWARTZ & WILSON

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JJS/sd
Enclosures

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JOHN J. SWARTZ, Reg. No. 24,626

By

Sherrin M. Dutton

Date

8/16/00

008780 45504960

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ADDRESS 8462 Section Line Road
Harbor Beach, MI 48441

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I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28(b)).

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

NAME OF PERSON SIGNING Braun-Woodke Products, LLC
ADDRESS OF PERSON SIGNING 8462 Section Line Road
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SIGNATURE

Clifford J. Braun

Date

8-7-00

Attorney's Docket No. 82194.03**PATENT**Applicant or Patentee: Clifford Braun and Derek Woodke

Serial or Patent No.: 0 / _____

Filed or Issued: _____

For: TREE STAND**VERIFIED STATEMENT (DECLARATION) CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY
STATUS (37 CFR 1.9(f) and 1.27(b))—INDEPENDENT INVENTOR**

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that I qualify as an independent inventor as defined in 37 CFR 1.9(c) for purposes of paying reduced fees under Section 41(a) and (b) of Title 35, United States Code, to the Patent and Trademark Office with regard to the invention entitled TREE STAND

described in

- ☒ the specification filed herewith.
☐ application serial no. 0 / _____, filed _____.
☐ patent no. _____, issued _____.

I have not assigned, granted, conveyed or licensed and am under no obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey or license, any rights in the invention to any person who could not be classified as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9(c) if that person had made the invention, or to any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9(d) or a nonprofit organization under 37 CFR 1.9(e).

Each person, concern or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed or am under an obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below:

- ☐ no such person, concern, or organization
☒ persons, concerns or organizations listed below *

*NOTE: Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27).

FULL NAME BRAUN-WOODKE PRODUCTS, LLC, a Michigan Limited Liability CompanyADDRESS 8462 Section Line RoadHarbor Beach, MI 48441

☐ INDIVIDUAL ☒ SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN ☐ NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

CLIFFORD BRAUN

Name of inventor

Clifford J. Braun

Signature of Inventor

Date 8-7-00

DEREK WOODKE

Name of inventor

Derek Woodke

Signature of Inventor

Date 8-7-00

Name of inventor

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Date _____

TREE STAND

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a tree stand and more particularly to an elevated platform having a vertical passage therethrough for allowing an individual to pass therethrough between the platform underside and the platform topside and, more particularly, to a new and novel door closure system for opening and closing the passage.

Tree stands are typically mounted on the trunk of a tree a substantial distance above the ground. Heretofore, access to the top side of the tree stand has been gained by way of ladder which leans against the tree and/or by vertically spaced foot pegs which have been detachable threaded into the tree. There is always a danger in laterally transferring oneself from the foot pegs or ladder to the tree stand because the user must laterally transfer himself to the tree stand after reaching the proper height. Such a transfer holds a danger of slipping or falling which is particularly hazardous because the transfer occurs at a substantial distance above the ground. Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide a new and novel tree stand which will minimize the dangers in accessing an elevated platform.

illustrated in the above referenced Patent No. 4,410,066 is relatively difficult to accomplish. Accordingly, its another object of the present invention to provide a new and novel tree stand having a new and novel pivotal closure door system which will provide easier and safer access to the top of an elevated platform.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a tree stand platform which will safely allow a hunter to gain access to the top of the platform from a position below the platform.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a tree stand of the type described which will allow quieter access thereto.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a new and novel tree stand having a pair of closure doors hingedly coupled at their laterally outer edges to the platform.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide a new and novel tree stand of the type described having a pair of doors which are moveable between coplaner positions closing the passage through the tree stand platform and transverse positions opening the passage.

Still yet another object of the present invention is to provide a new and novel tree stand having a vertical access opening therethrough and a pair of closure doors each having a breath not greater than one-half of the breath of the opening.

positions.

These and other objects of the present invention will become more apparent as the description proceeds.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A tree stand comprising a platform for supporting an individual and including a vertical access passage therethrough for allowing the vertical ascent and descent of an individual therethrough between a position underlying the platform and a position overlying the platform; mechanism for mounting the platform in a generally horizontally disposed position on an upstanding support, such as a tree trunk; a pair of closure doors; and mechanism articulately mounting the closure doors on the platform adjacent to the passage for movement between closure positions adjacent each other and generally lying in the same plane to close the passage and provide a support for an individual overlying the platform and open upstanding positions transverse to the plane alongside said passage to allow an individual to pass through the passage.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

For a further understanding of the nature and object of the present invention, reference should be had to the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is a side elevational view of a tree stand constructed according to the

present invention illustrating the position and also in a vertical position the seat in a horizontal position, the platform access doors closed, and the platform in a horizontal position, and also in a raised position in phantom;

Fig. 2 is a similar side elevational view, parts being broken away in section to better illustrate a J-hook for coupling the tree stand to a tree trunk, and illustrating the seat, in a raised, vertical position, one of the platform access doors open, and a tree, in phantom, on which the tree stand is mounted;

Fig. 2A is a greatly enlarged view of the J-hook for coupling the tree stand to a tree trunk;

Fig. 3 is a front elevational view thereof, taken along the line 3-3 of Fig. 2, with the seat up and one of the platform access doors open;

Fig. 4 is a top plan view, taken along the line 4-4 of Fig. 1, which illustrates the seat in the horizontal position and the platform access doors closed;

Fig. 5 is a rear elevational view, taken along the line 5-5 of Fig. 1, wherein the seat is illustrated in the horizontal position and the platform access doors are closed;

Fig. 6 is an opposite front elevational view, taken along the line 6-6 of Fig. 1, illustrating the apparatus constructed according to the present invention with the seat in the horizontal position and the platform access doors closed, parts being broken away to better illustrate the pivot pins for mounting the seat and the platform;

Fig. 6A is a greatly enlarged front sectional view more particularly illustrating

one of the seat mounting pivot parts illustrated in Fig. 6;

partially open positions;

Fig. 15 is a bottom perspective view of the tree stand illustrated in Fig. 13 but illustrating the seat in a horizontal position;

Fig. 16 is a side perspective view, similar to Fig. 13, but illustrating the access doors in open transverse positions.; and

Fig. 17 is a greatly enlarged, sectional view, taken along the line 17A-17A of Fig. 14.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

A tree stand, generally designated 10, constructed according to the present invention, comprises a foldable chair, generally designated 11, pivotally mounted on a platform, generally designated 13, via pivot pins 15 (Fig. 6). The tree stand 10 is particularly adapted to be mounted in an elevated position on the side of an upstanding support, such as a tree trunk 12. The chair 11 includes a pair of upstanding laterally spaced, rearwardly disposed, rearwardly upwardly inclined frame bars 17 provided with lower vertical ends 19, through which the pivot pins 15 are coupled, and upwardly converging upper ends 21 mounting, a back rest 28. The chair 11 includes a generally rectangular back frame 14 having upper and lower frame bars 16 integrally coupled, at there ends, to a pair of vertical side bars 18 via 90° corner elbows 20. The back frame 14 is welded or otherwise suitably coupled to frame bars 17.

The chair 11 also includes a seat 30 fixed to a pair of L-shaped mounts 32, which are pivotally mounted on the end frame members 18, via pivot pins 34. The seat 30 can swing between the raised vertical or up positions, illustrated in Fig. 2, and the horizontal or down position illustrated in Fig. 1. A pair of flaccid lines or chains, generally designated 36, coupled between the end frame members 18 and the seat 30 prevent downward swinging movement of seat 30 below the horizontal position illustrated in Fig. 1.

The platform 13 includes a platform frame, generally designated 38, having front and rear angle members 40 and 42 respectively spanned by laterally spaced side members 44 and 46. As illustrated in Figs 9-12, the platform frame members 40, 42, 44 and 46 are laterally spaced L-shaped or right angle shaped frame bars. The L-shaped platform frame members 40, 42, 44 and 46 including horizontal flanges 41, 43, 45 and 47 (Figs 11 and 12), respectively.

The frame members 40, 42, 44 and 46 of platform 13 form an access passage or opening 53 through which an individual can upwardly or downwardly pass to gain access to, or to remove from, the upper side of platform 13.

Hingedly mounted on the front and rear end platform frame angle members 40 and 42, via pivot pins 52, for swinging movement thereon is a pair of platform closure doors, generally designated 48 and 50. The doors 48 and 50 include front and rear

inverted L-shaped angle frame members, generally designated 54 and 56, respectively, spanned by laterally outer and inner inverted L-shaped angle frame members 58 and 60. Welded or otherwise or suitably secured to the horizontal flanges 55, 57, 59 and 61 of frame members 54, 56, 58 and 60, respectively, is an expanded metal sheet or screen 62. A central brace 64 spans spaced side frame members 58 and 60 for supporting the central portion of the expanded metal sheet or screen 62.

Flaccid cables 65 are coupled to the back frame members 18 and the laterally outer seat side, frame members 44 and 46 for supporting the platform 13 on the back frame member 14 to preclude its downward swinging movement beyond the horizontal position illustrated in Figures 9 and 10.

Welded or otherwise suitably fixed to the back of the rear platform frame bar 42 of the platform frame 38 is a pair of tree receiving brackets, generally designated 66 and 68, (Fig. 4) which form rearwardly diverging surfaces 70 and 72, respectively, for bearing against the front 73 of the tree trunk 12.

The tree stand 10 is detachably mounted on the front 73 of the tree trunk 12 via a J-hook, generally designated 74, having a long rear leg 76 and a short front leg 78 coupled together via a U-shaped curvilinear connector bar 80 which forms a saddle for receiving the upper back frame bar 16. The longer back leg 76 is tightly clamped to the tree trunk 12 via an adjustable length strap 82 which has opposite ends that extend around opposite sides of the tree trunk and are detachably tied together or

coupled together with suitable fasteners (not shown).

It should be noted that the back frame bars 17 and back frame 14 are rearwardly upwardly inclined so that the upper frame bar 16 (Fig. 2) is immediately adjacent the front 73 of the tree trunk 12 and the platform 38 is spaced forwardly of the tree trunk 12, as illustrated. The rearwardly diverging tree receiving bracket 70 and 72 project rearwardly relative to the frame 38 so to generally underlie the frame bar 16 and receive a lower portion of the tree trunk 12.

As illustrated in Figs 10 and 11 the doors 48 and 50 are, when closed, basically co- planar, in the plane 75 of the platform 38 (Fig. 6) and are supported by platform flanges 41, 43, 45 and 47 to provide a strong, lightweight floor which will support a hunter thereon.

THE OPERATION

The tree stand 10 can be folded for transport to the field with the seat 30 in the raised or vertical position illustrated in Figs. 3 and 9, and the platform 13 swung upwardly, in the direction of the arrow 84, to the position illustrated in chain lines in Fig. 1, facilitating easy transport of the tree stand 20 to the field. In the field, the user will use a ladder or install vertically spaced foot pegs (not shown) in the tree trunk 12 to climb the tree trunk 12 and carry the folded tree stand 10 up to the desired elevation thereon.

The J-hook 74 is coupled to the tree trunk 12 via the strap 82 passing around the rear J-hook leg 78 and the tree trunk 12. The upper frame bar member 16 is then deposited into the saddle 80 of J-hook 74 (Fig 2A) with the rearwardly converging frame bars 68, 66 bearing against the front surface 73 of tree trunk 12 as illustrated in Fig. 4. When so positioned, the platform 13 can be lowered from the raised vertical position, illustrated in chain lines Fig. 1, to the lower horizontal position, illustrated in the solid lines in Fig. 1, supported on the back frame member 14 by the side cables 65. The seat 30 will initially remain in the raised vertical position illustrated in solid lines in Fig. 2.

The tree stand can remain so positioned for periodic use by a hunter. When the user desires to gain access to the platform 13, the user, need only, via a ladder or foot pegs, (not shown), approach the underside 86 of the platform 13, and push the laterally adjacent, inner door frame members 60 upwardly to swing the doors 48 and 50 about the pivot pins 52 to the raised, open positions illustrated in Fig. 9. In the transverse positions of the doors 48 & 50, illustrated in Figs. 7-9, the user can easily move upwardly through the access opening 53 between the open doors 48 and 50 and stand on a portion of the rear brace 42, and/or braces 66 & 68, with one foot and pull one of the doors 50, for example, closed with the other foot and then step on the closed door 50 with the other foot and use the one foot to close the opposite door 48. In the lowered, closed positions of the doors 48 and 50 illustrated in Fig. 10, the doors 48

and 50 close the opening 53 and provide a strong a durable platform to support the user.

When the hunter desires to remove himself from the platform 13, he need only open the doors 48 and 50 to the transverse position illustrated in Fig. 9, and lower himself through the opening 43 onto the pegs or underlying ladder.

ALTERNATE EMBODIMENT

Referring now more particularly to Figs. 13-16, a slightly modified tree stand, generally designated 10A, is illustrated and generally similar parts will be identified by generally similar reference characters followed by the letter A subscript. The tree stand 10A primarily differs from the tree stand 10 in that the laterally adjacent doors 48 and 50 are replaced by front and rear doors 48A and 50A, respectively. The front door 48A includes a pair of laterally spaced apart tubular bars 88 having front ends 90 pivotally coupled to brackets 92 on the front frame bar 40A via pivot pins 94.

Mounted on the laterally spaced bars tubular bars 88 is a plurality of spaced apart laterally extending tubular frame bars 96 which are welded or otherwise suitably secured to the top sides of the spaced apart tubular bars 88 for supporting, in the lowered position illustrated in Fig 15, a person thereon.

The rearward door 50A includes a pair of laterally spaced apart tubular bars 98 supporting a plurality of longitudinally cross bars 100 for supporting a user thereon.

The cross bars 100 are welded or otherwise suitably affixed to the tubular bars 98. The front ends 102 of the bars 98 are pivotally coupled to the rear ends 104 of the front tubular bars 88. The rearward end 106 of one of the side rails 98 is slidably received on the horizontal leg 47A of the platform side rail 46A via a pair of U-shaped clips, T, welded to opposite ends of the rearward most crossbar 101 coupled to the bars 98, which receives the lower frame leg 47A. The guides 108 force the rear ends 106 of the rear bars 98 to move in a linear path as the doors 48A and 58A are being swung between the co-planar positions, illustrated in Fig. 13, to the upstanding, folded, co-extensive positions alongside each other (Fig. 16). A handle 110 is coupled to one of the cross bars 100 to assist this movement.

The rear brace 66A may be constructed identically to the tree braces 66 & 68 but is schematically illustrated as an elongate bar.

In the position of the doors 48A & 50A illustrated in Fig. 16, the opening 53A provides an easy access opening for users to gain access to the topside of the platform 13A. By merely pulling on the handle 110 on the open rear door 50A, both doors 48A and 50A will rearwardly unfold to reassume the co-planar positions as illustrated in Fig. 15 in which the doors 48A and 50A are co-planar. And close the opening 53A.

It is to be understood that the drawings and descriptive matter are in all cases to be interpreted as merely illustrative of the principles of the invention, rather

than as limiting the same in any way, since it is contemplated that various changes may be made in various elements to achieve like results without departing from the spirit of the invention or the scope of the appended claims.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:

1. A tree stand comprising:

a platform for supporting an individual including a vertical access opening therethrough for allowing the vertical passage of an individual therethrough between a position underlying the platform and a position overlying the platform;

means for mounting said platform in a generally horizontally disposed position on an upstanding support, such as a tree trunk;

a pair of closure doors; and

means articulately mounting said closure doors on said platform adjacent said opening for movement between

closure positions adjacent each other and generally lying in the same plane to close said opening and provide a support for an individual overlying said platform, and

open upstanding positions transverse to said plane alongside said opening to allow an individual to pass through said opening.

2. The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein said platform lies in said plane of said doors in said closure positions.

3. The tree stand set forth in claim 2 including seat means on which an individual positioned on said platform may sit; means for mounting said seat means in vertically spaced relation with said platform.

4. The tree stand set forth in claim 3 wherein said seat means includes a generally upstanding back frame; means articulately coupling said platform on said back frame between a support position transverse to said back frame and a stowed upstanding position extending alongside said back frame.

5. The tree stand set forth in claim 4 wherein said seat means includes means articulately coupling said seat on said back frame for swinging movement between a generally horizontal support position and a generally vertical position alongside said back frame.

6. The tree stand set forth in claim 5 including first flaccid means spanning a front portion of said platform and a portion of said back frame for precluding downward swinging movement of said platform beyond a predetermined position relative to said back frame; and second flaccid means spanning a front portion of said seat and an upper portion of said back frame to limit the downward swinging movement of said seat relative to said back frame.

7. The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein each of said closure doors includes a laterally inner edge portion and a laterally outer edge portion; said laterally inner edge portions being disposed adjacent each other and in the same plane when said closure doors are in said closure positions and disposed out of said plane when said doors are in said open positions.

8. The tree stand set forth in claim 7 wherein said means articulately mounting said closure doors in said platform includes means for swingably coupling at least one of said laterally outer edge portions to a portion of said platform adjacent said vertical access opening.

9. The tree stand set forth in claim 7 wherein said doors in said closure positions each close substantially one-half of said opening.

10. The tree stand set forth in claim 7 wherein said means articulately mounting said closure doors to said platform includes first and second laterally outer hinge means swingably coupled to said laterally outer portions of said pair of doors to allow said doors to concurrently swing in opposite directions as said doors move between said closure positions and said open positions.

11. The tree stand set forth in claim 10 wherein said means articulately mounting said closure doors to said platform includes hinge means swingably coupling said laterally inner edge portions together to fold said doors relative to each other to generally coextensive side-by-side positions in said open positions.

12. The tree stand set forth in claim 11 including guide means coupled to said laterally outer edge portion of the other of said doors to guide the laterally outer edge in a generally linear path between a position adjacent one lateral side of said opening and a position adjacent an opposite lateral side of said opening.

13. The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein each of said closure doors comprises an elongate panel having a forward end portion, a rearward end portion and laterally inner and outer edge positions spanning said forward and rearward end portions; said laterally inner edge portions lying in the same plane when said doors are in said closure positions; said means articulately mounting said closure doors including means pivotally coupling at least one of said closure doors for lateral swinging movement on said platform between said closed position and an upstanding position transverse to said plane.

14. The tree stand set forth in claim 13 wherein said means articulately mounting said closure doors includes hinge means swingably coupling said laterally outer portions of said closure doors to said platform for movement in opposite swinging directions between said closed positions in which said closure doors are coplanar and said open positions.

15. The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein each of said closure doors comprises an elongate panel having a forward end portion, a rearward end portion and laterally inner and outer edge portions spanning said forward and rearward end portions; said forward end portion of one of said doors being pivotally mounted on said platform; said rearward end portion of said one door and said forward portion of the other of said doors being swingably coupled together.

16. A tree stand comprising;

a horizontal platform including a vertical opening therethrough of predetermined breadth of such size for allowing the passage of a person therethrough;

means for detachably coupling said platform to a vertical support, such as a tree trunk;

first and second oppositely swingable closure means for selectively closing said opening to provide a floor on which a person passing through the opening can stand and swingable movable on said platform to an open position allowing a person to vertically pass therethrough;

said first and second closure means each having a breadth substantially equal to one-half of said predetermined breadth.

17. In combination with a generally horizontal platform having an underside and a topside and a vertical access opening therethrough between said underside and topside of sufficient size to permit an individual to pass therethrough between said underside and topside of said platform; and means for mounting said platform on an upstanding support, such as a tree trunk; the improvement comprising;

a pair of elongate doors having opposite end portions spanned by laterally inner and outer edge portions; means articulately mounting said doors to said platform for swinging movement between closure positions lying in the same plane and open positions transverse to said plane including

means pivotally mounting said laterally outer edge portions of said pair of elongate doors to said platform for concurrent swinging movement in opposite directions between said closed and open positions.

18. In combination with a platform for supporting an individual and means for supporting said platform on a vertical support, such as an upstanding tree trunk, said platform having a front end portion, rear end portion, laterally opposite sides portion, and a vertical access opening therethrough of sufficient size to allow an individual to pass therethrough, the improvement comprising:

a front closure door having

a front end pivotally coupled to said front end portion of said platform,

and

a rear end;

a rear closure door having a front end pivotally coupled to said rear end of said front closure door; said closure doors being movable between coplanar closed positions closing said opening and transversely disposed, open folded positions in which said closure doors are disposed in confronting relation with each other.

19. The combination set forth in claim 18 including means slidably coupling said rear end of said rear door to said platform for sliding movement in a linear path while said front end of said rear closure door swings between said open and closed positions.

20. In combination with an elevated platform for supporting an individual and means

for supporting said platform on a vertical support, such as an upstanding tree trunk, said platform having a front end, a rear end, and laterally opposite sides spanning said front and rear ends; said front and rear ends and said laterally opposite sides defining a vertical access opening therethrough of such size as to allow an individual to vertically pass therethrough; first and second elongate closure doors each having a front end portion, a rear end portion and lateral edge portions spanning said front and rear end portions;

means articulately coupling said closure doors to said platform for swinging movement in opposite directions between coplanar closed positions closing said opening and transversely disposed open positions including pivot means articulately coupling said doors to said platform.

21. The combination set forth in claim 21 wherein said platform comprises a door frame having front and rear end frame members spanned by a pair of laterally spaced side frame members; said pivot means coupling at least said laterally outer edge portions of said doors to said front and rear end frame members for swinging movement thereon in opposite directions between said coplanar closed positions and said transversely disposed open positions on laterally outer sides of said opening.

22. The combination set forth in claim 21 wherein said front and rear end frame

members comprises L-shaped frame bars having an upstanding leg and horizontal leg integral with a lower end of said upstanding leg for supporting said doors.

23. The combination set forth in claim 22 wherein said platform comprises a door frame having front and rear end frame members spanned by a pair of laterally spaced side frame members; said pivot means comprising:

first pivot members pivotally coupling said front end portion of one of said doors to said front end frame member;

second pivot members pivotally coupling said rear end portion of said one door to said front end portion of the other of said doors for relative opposite swinging movement thereon; and guide means for guiding said rear end of said other door on said frame for linear movement thereon as doors move between said open and closed positions.

ABSTRACT

A tree stand including a horizontal platform and mechanism for detachably coupling the platform to a vertical support, such as a tree. The platform includes a vertical access opening therethrough allowing an individual to gain access to the top side of the platform from the underside thereof via a vertical opening extending through the platform. A pair of closure doors is articulately mounted on the platform for swinging movement between co-planar, closed positions, closing the opening and transverse, open positions. The doors can either be individually swingably mounted at there laterally outer edges to the platform or articulately connected to each other and only one of the doors pivotally coupled to the platform.

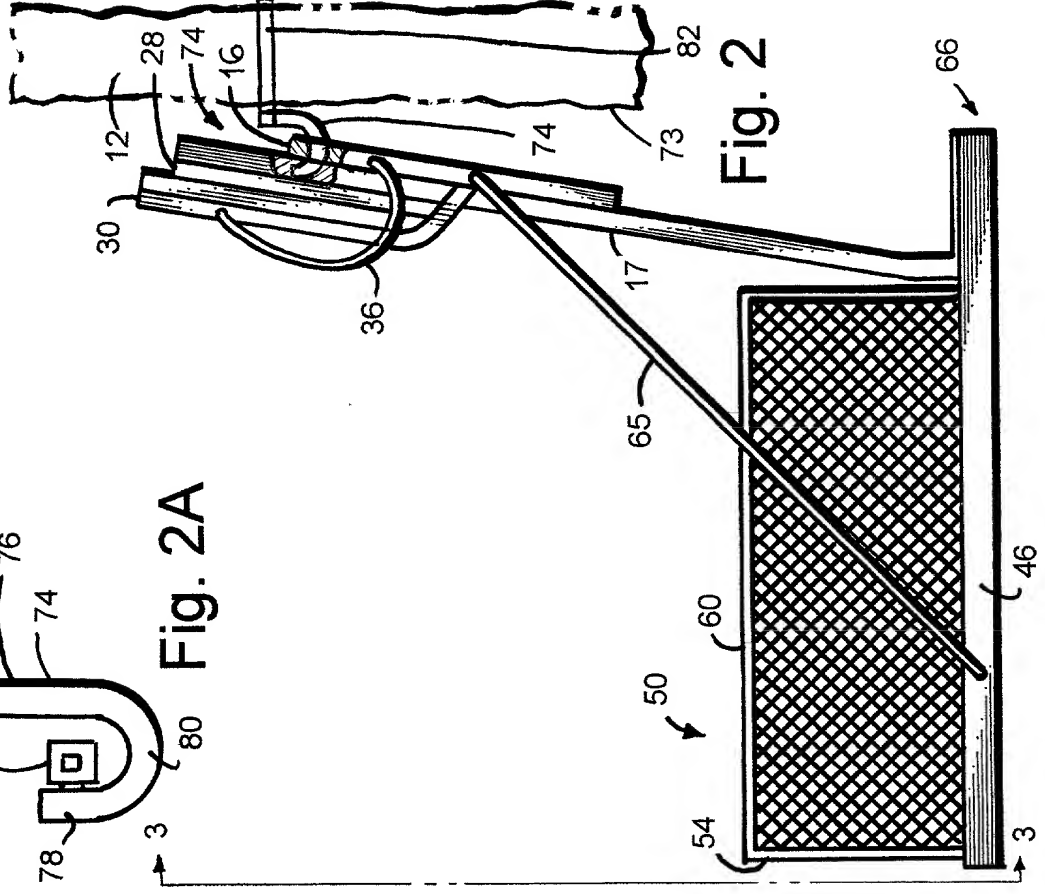
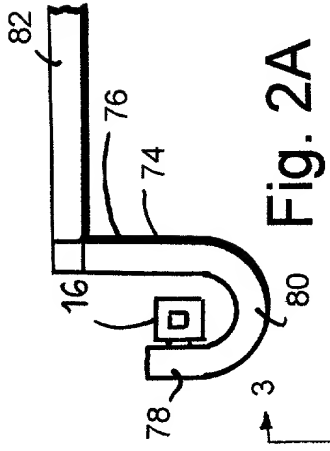
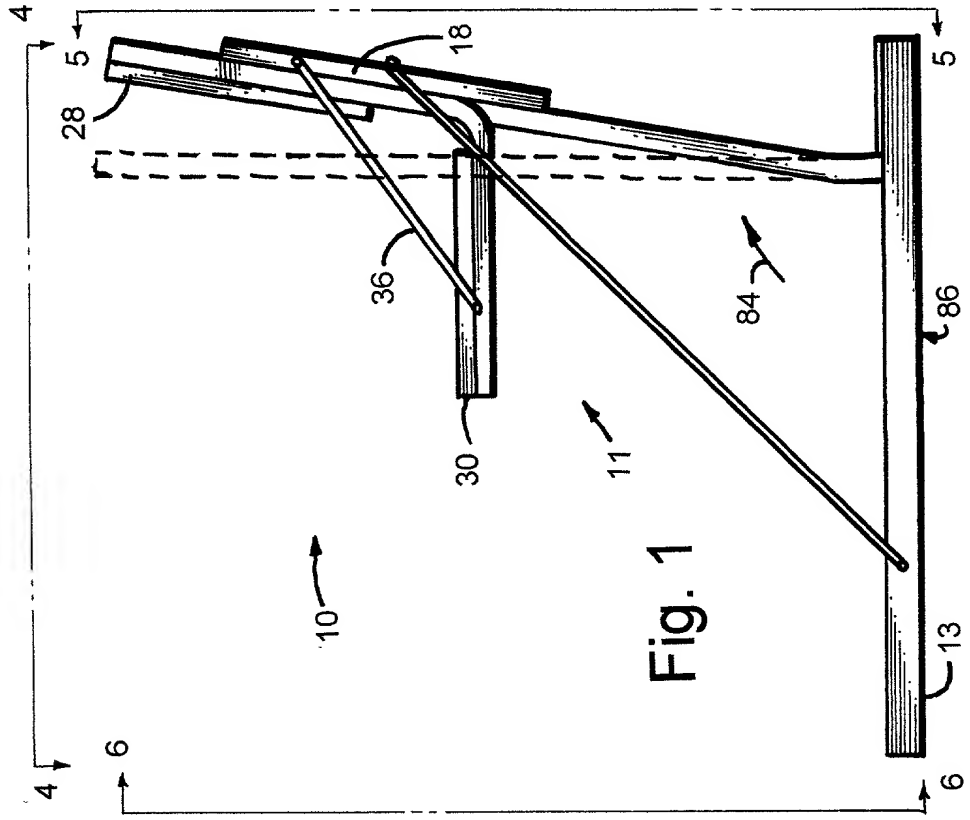


Fig. 3

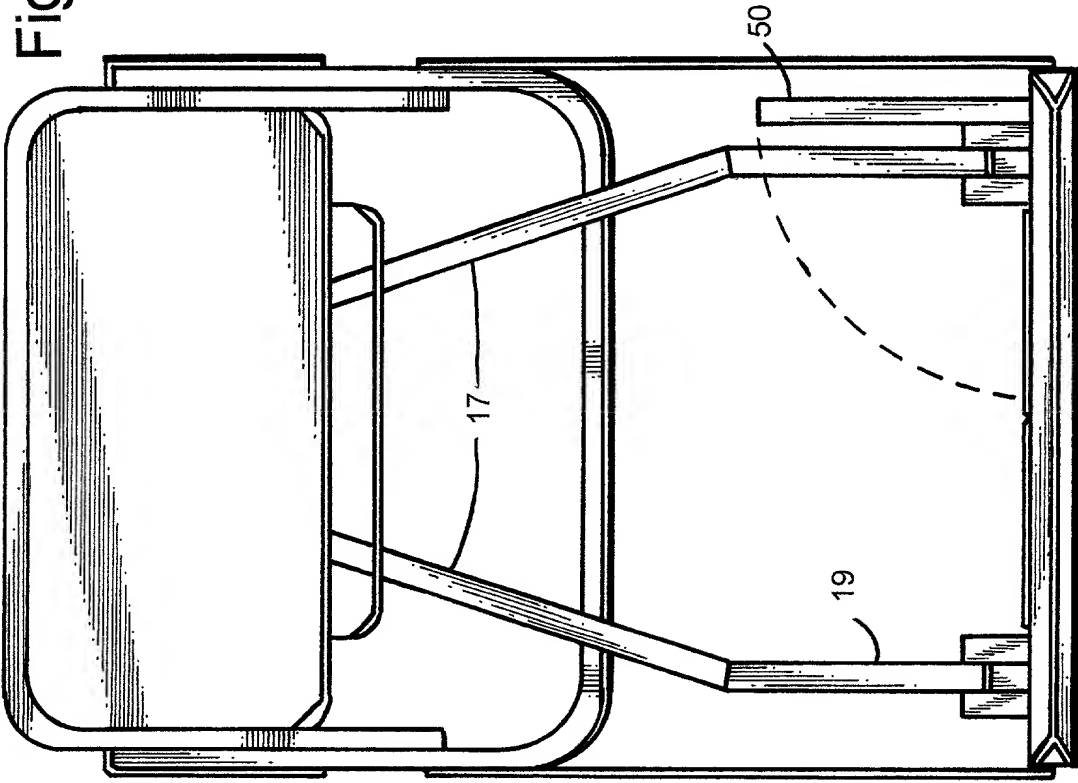


Fig. 4

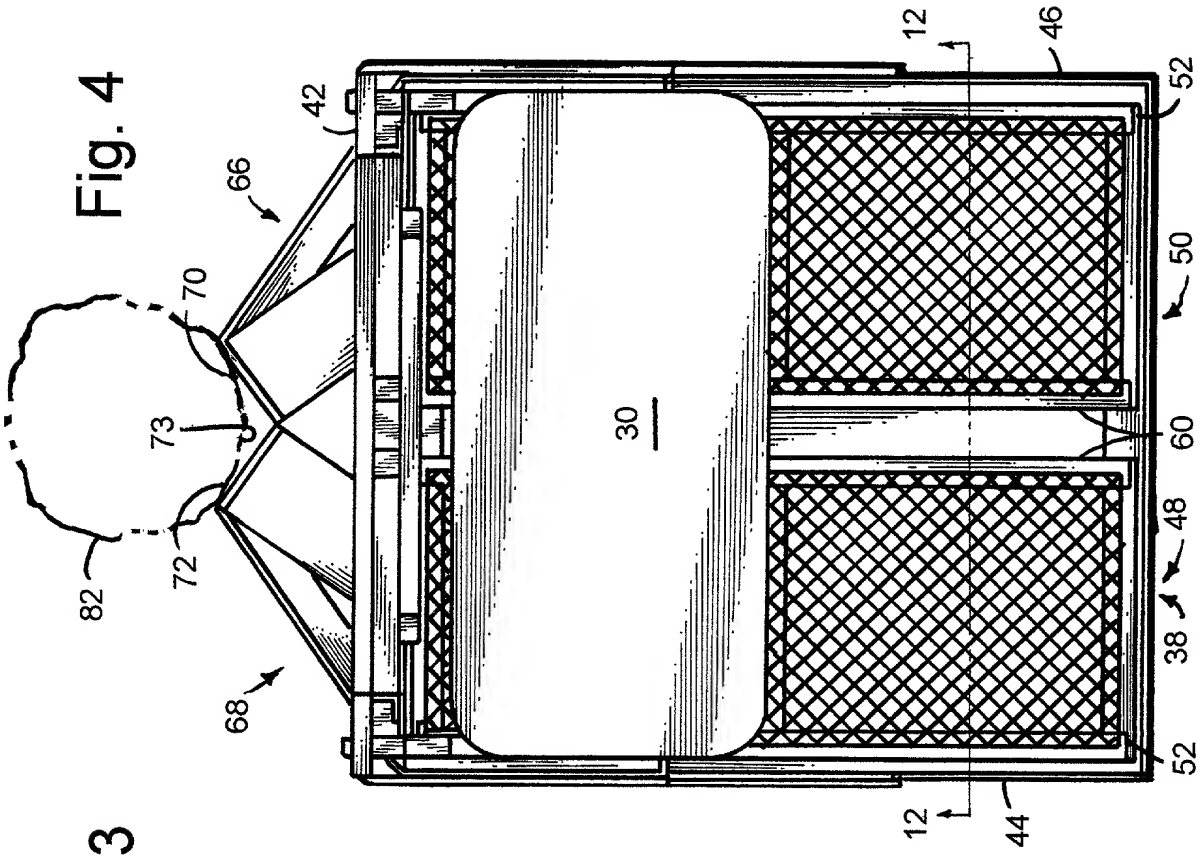


Fig. 5

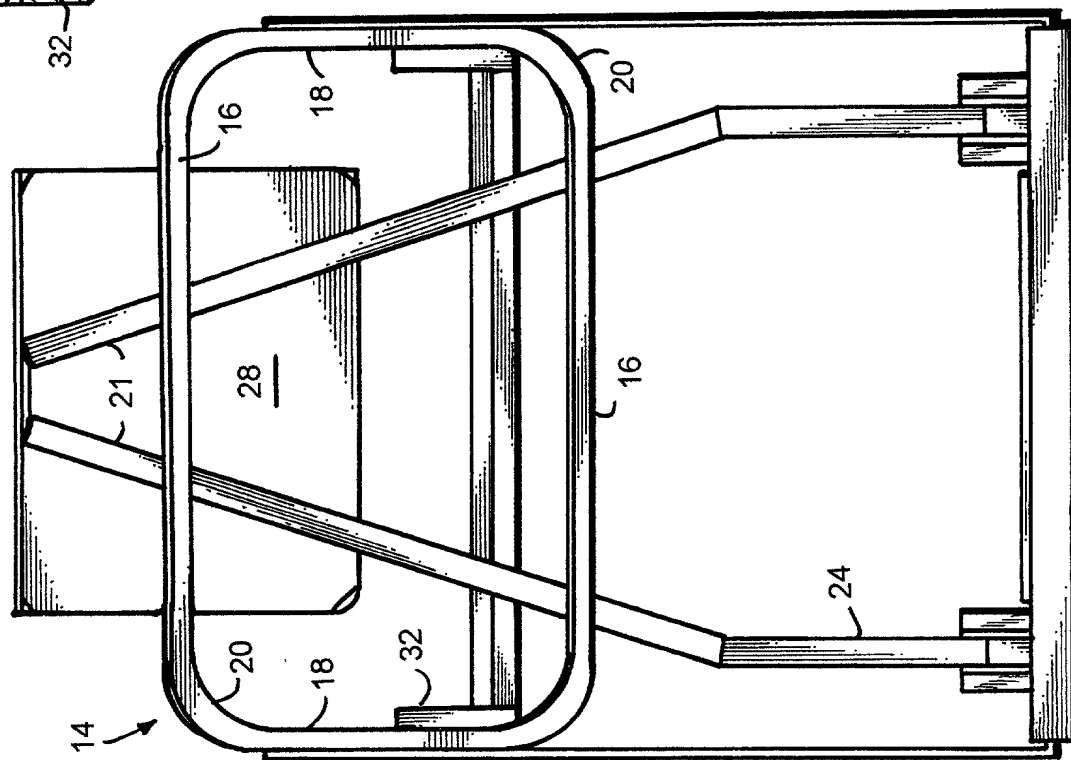


Fig. 6A

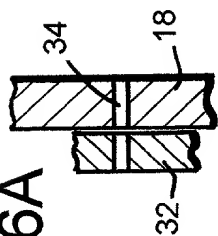
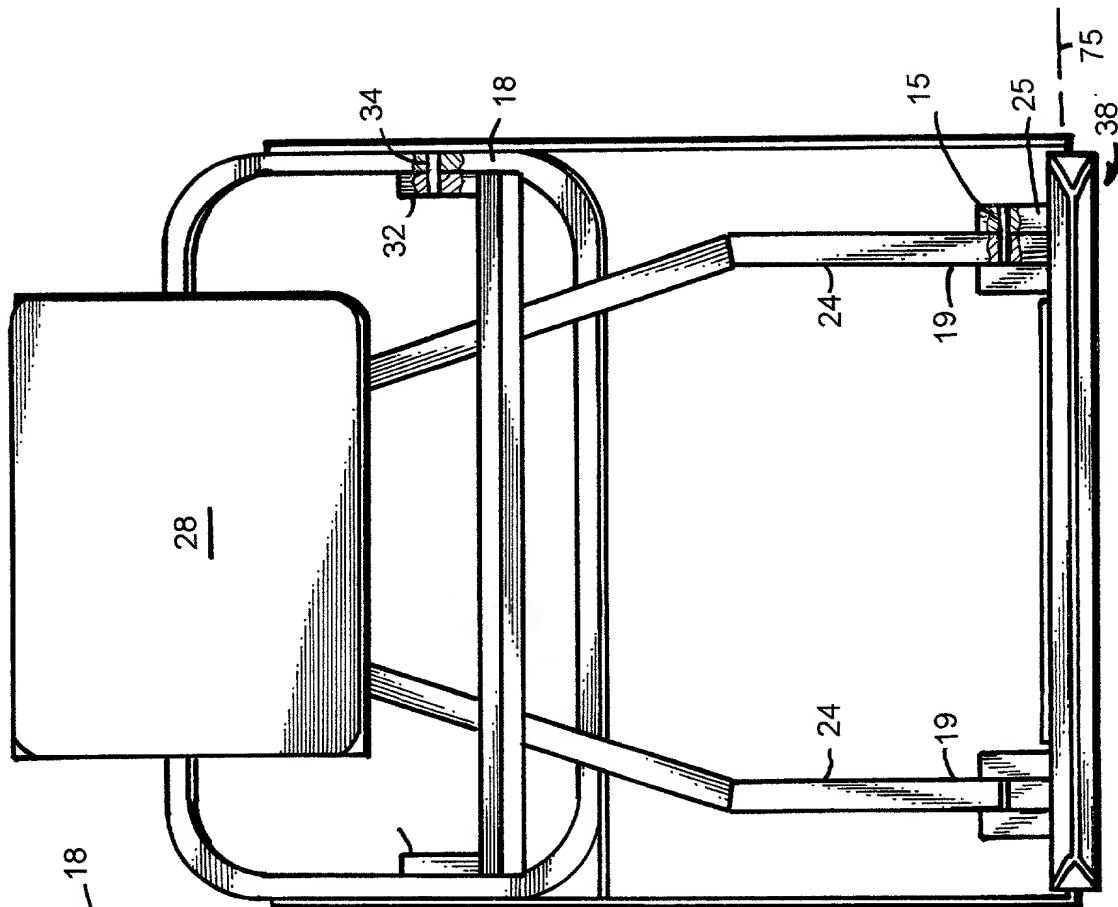


Fig. 6



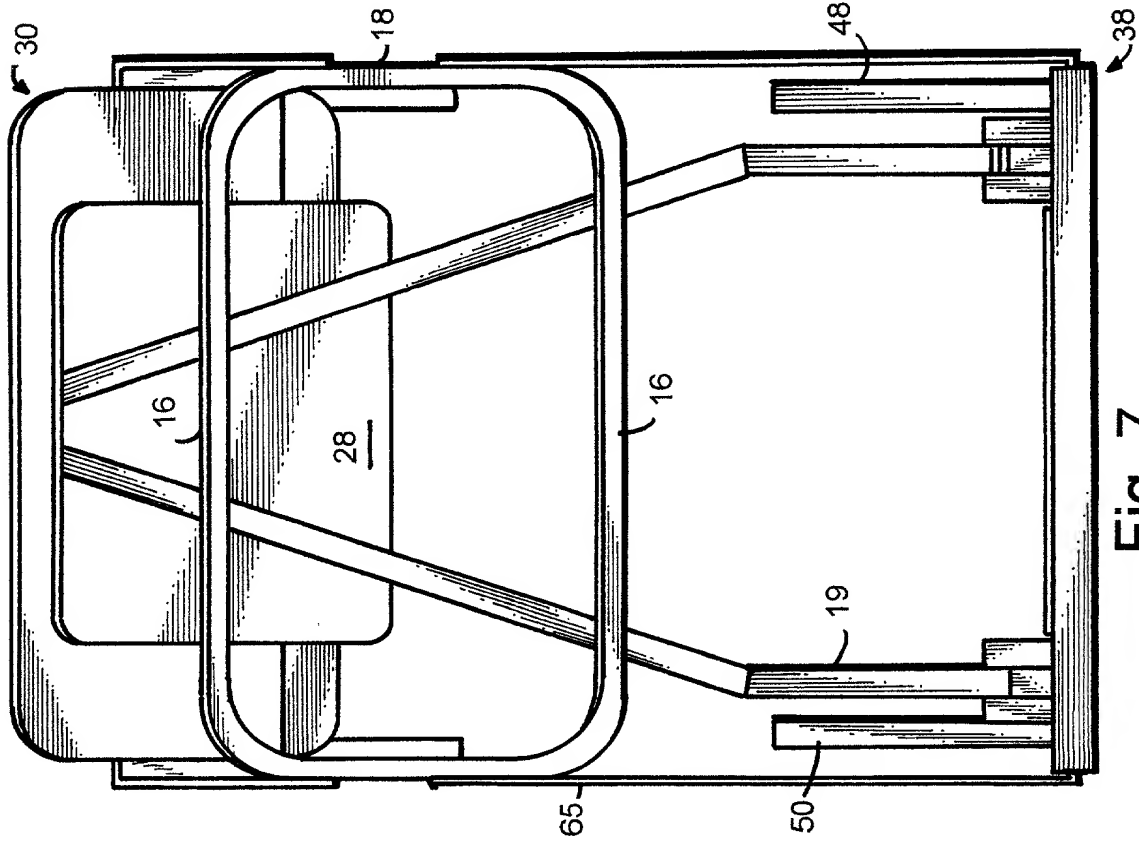


Fig. 7

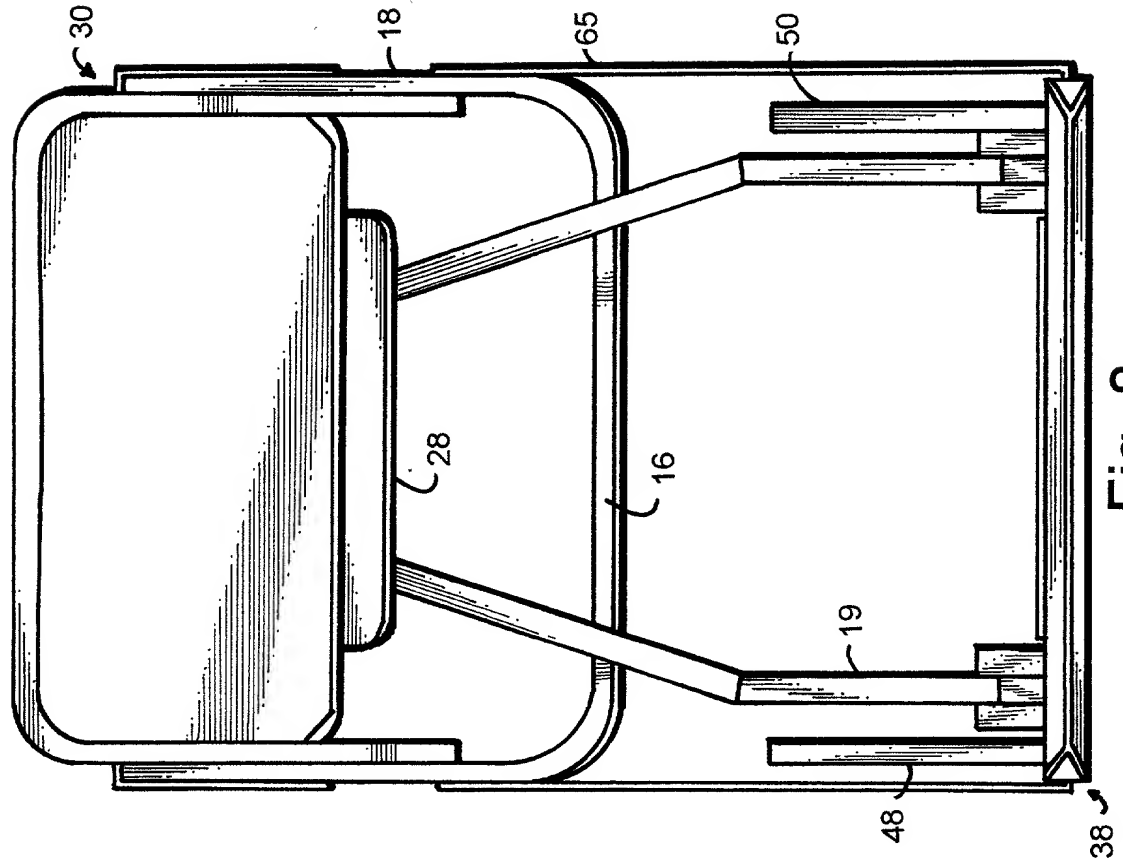


Fig. 8

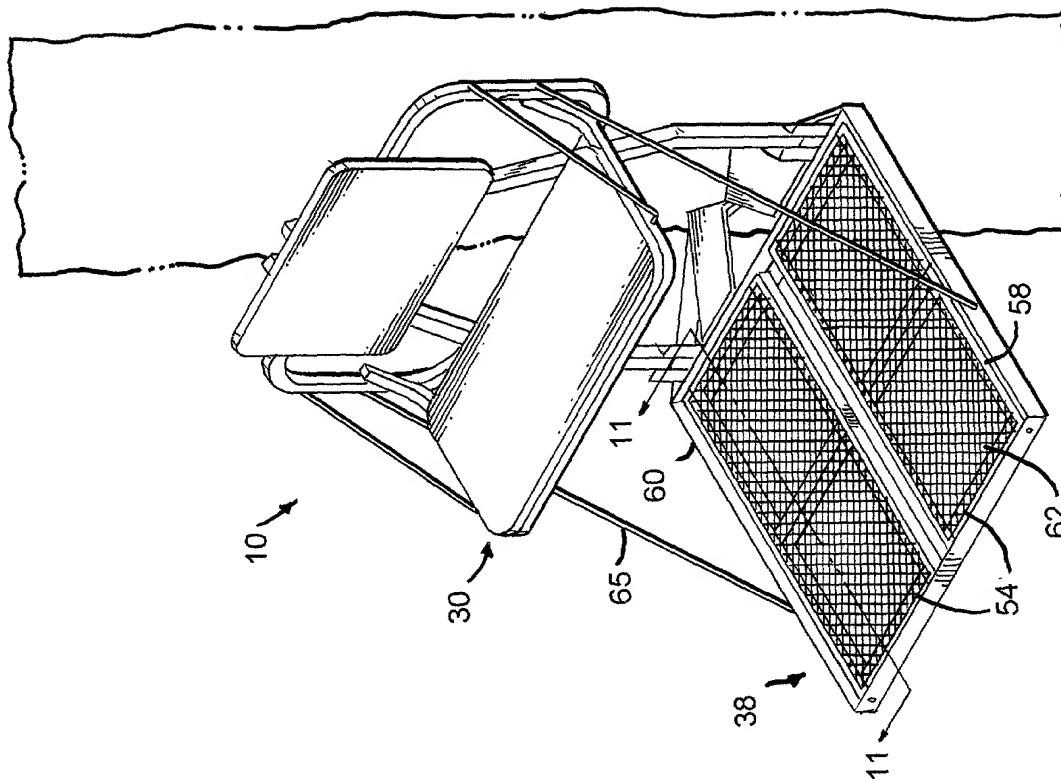


Fig. 10

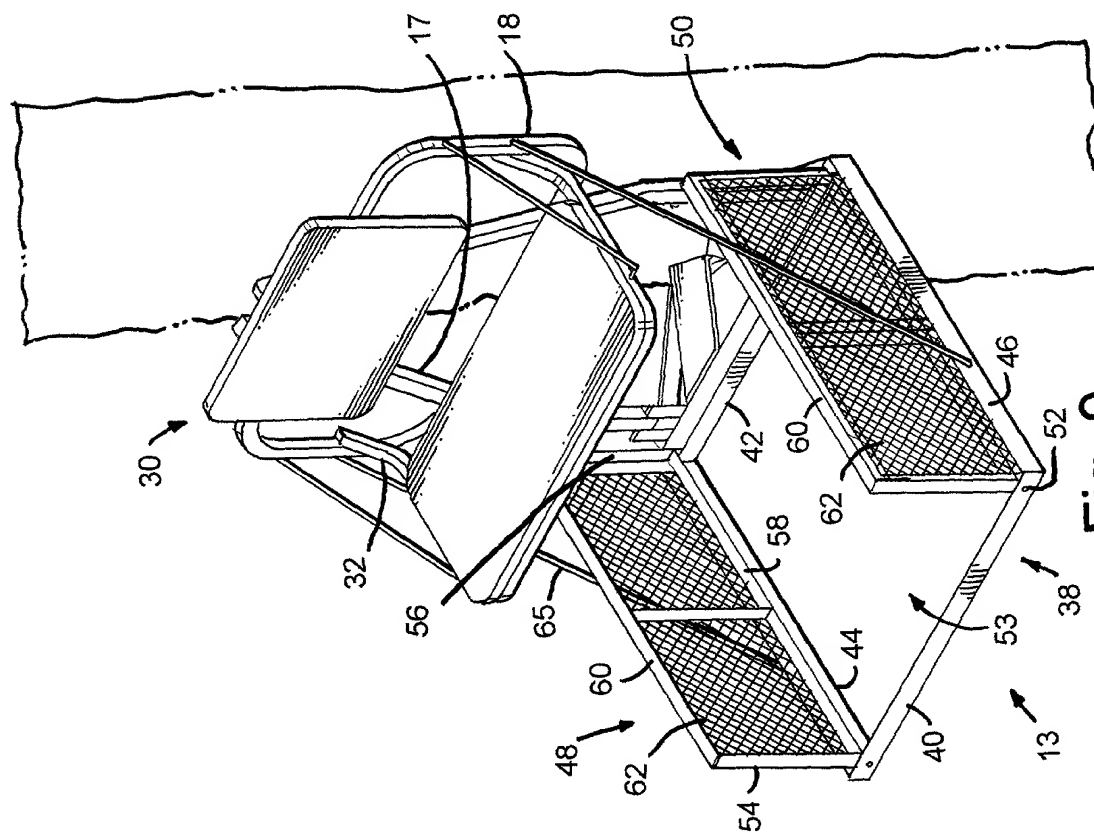


Fig. 9

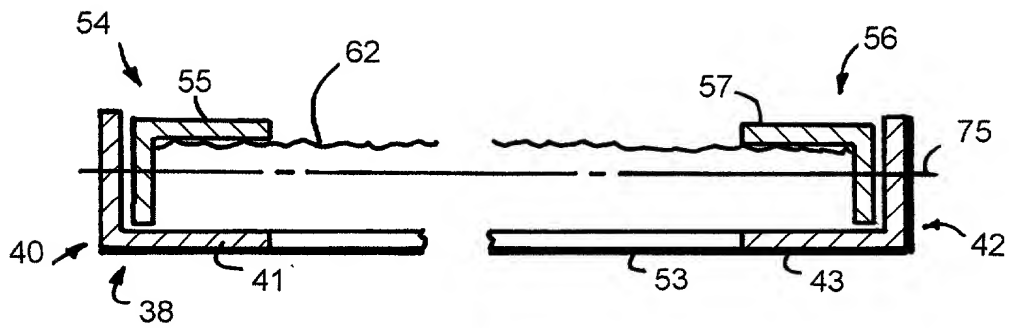


Fig. 11

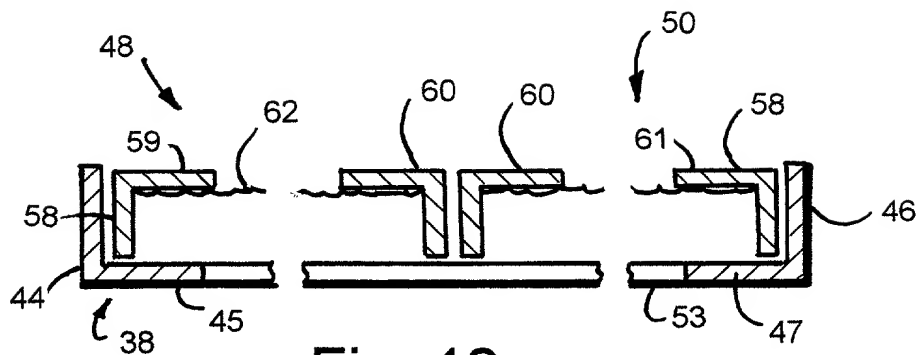


Fig. 12

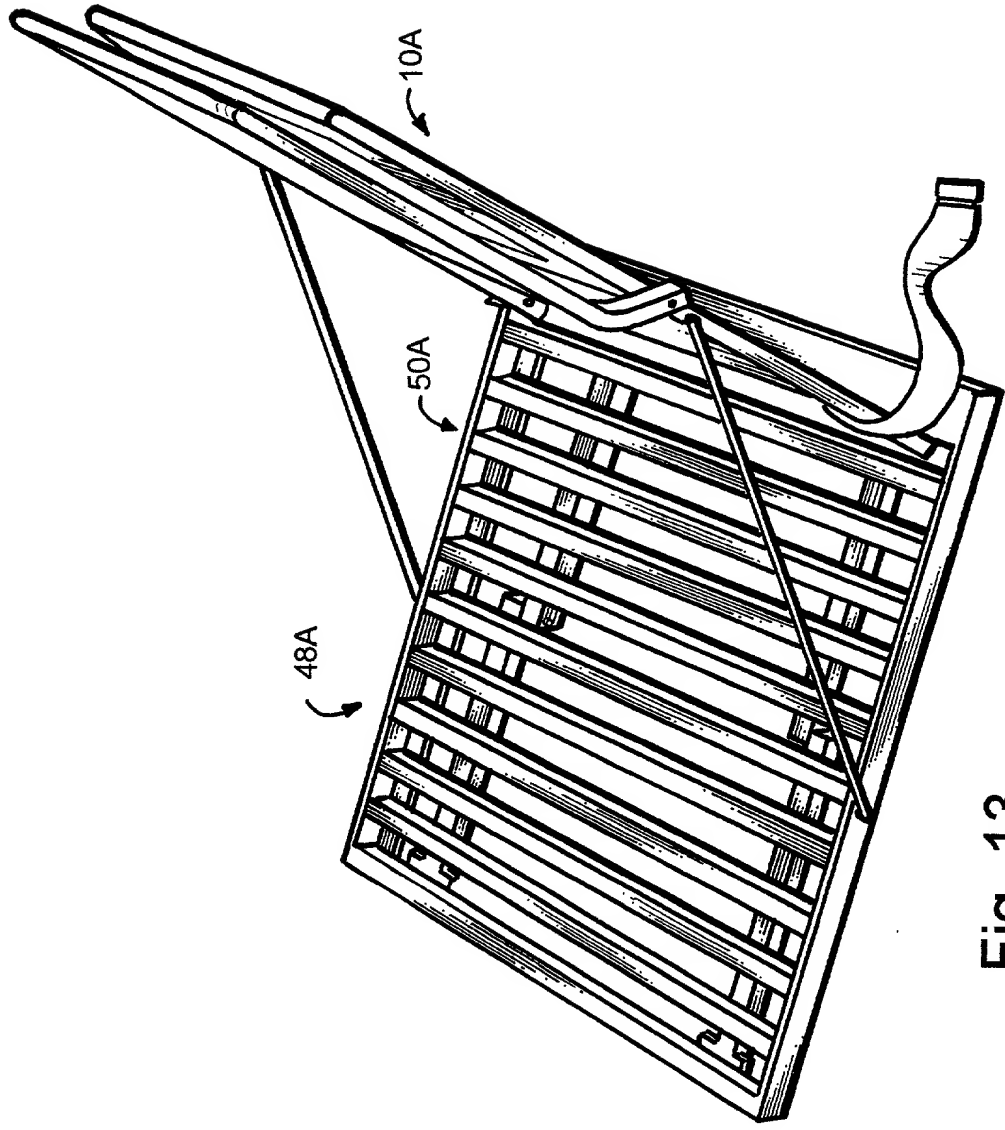


Fig. 13

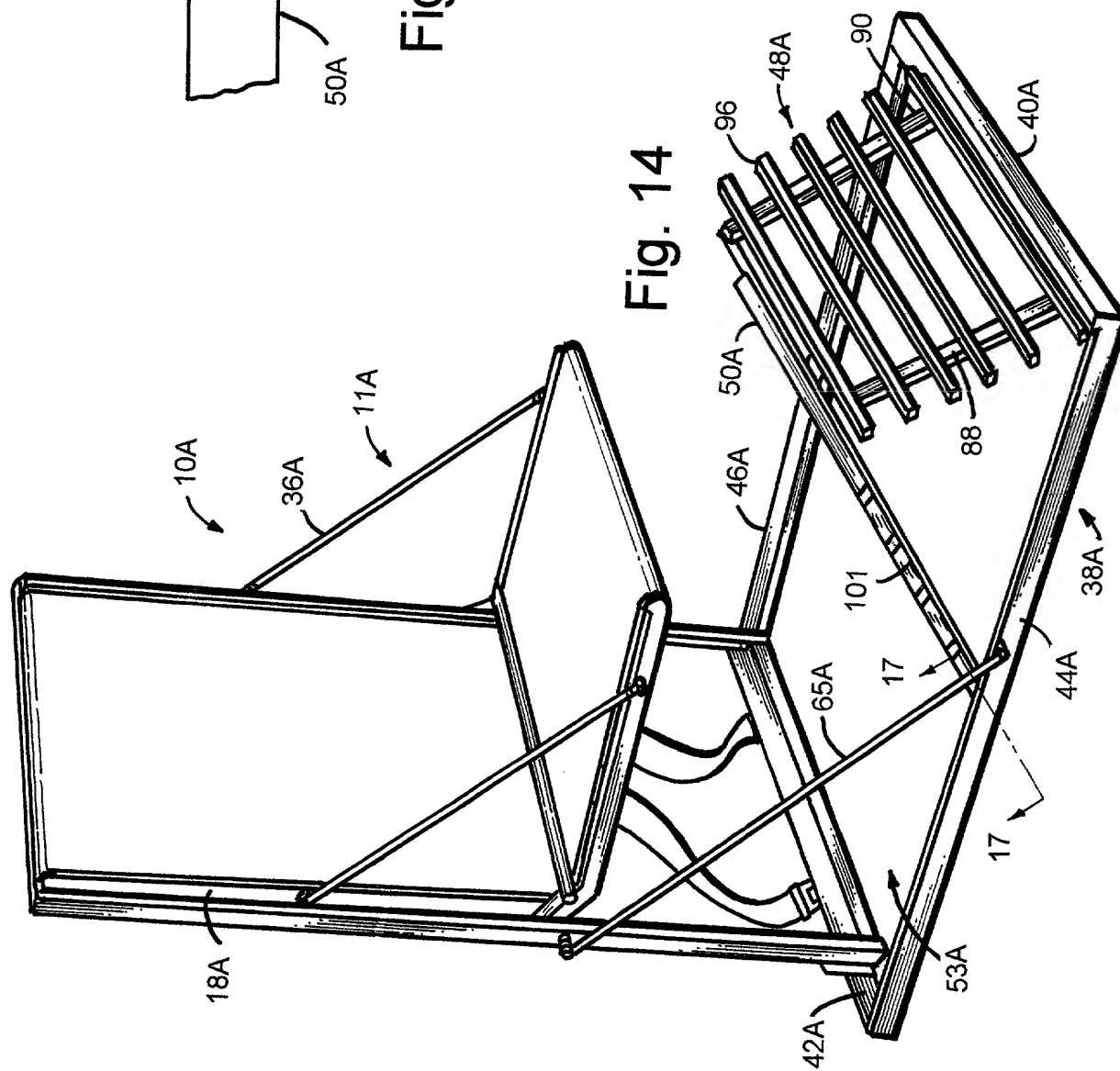


Fig. 14

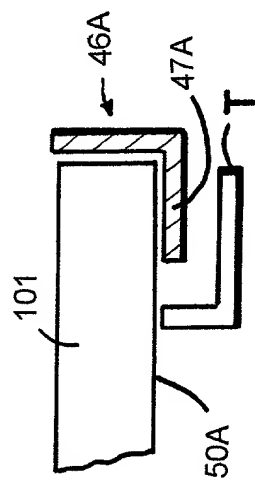


Fig. 17

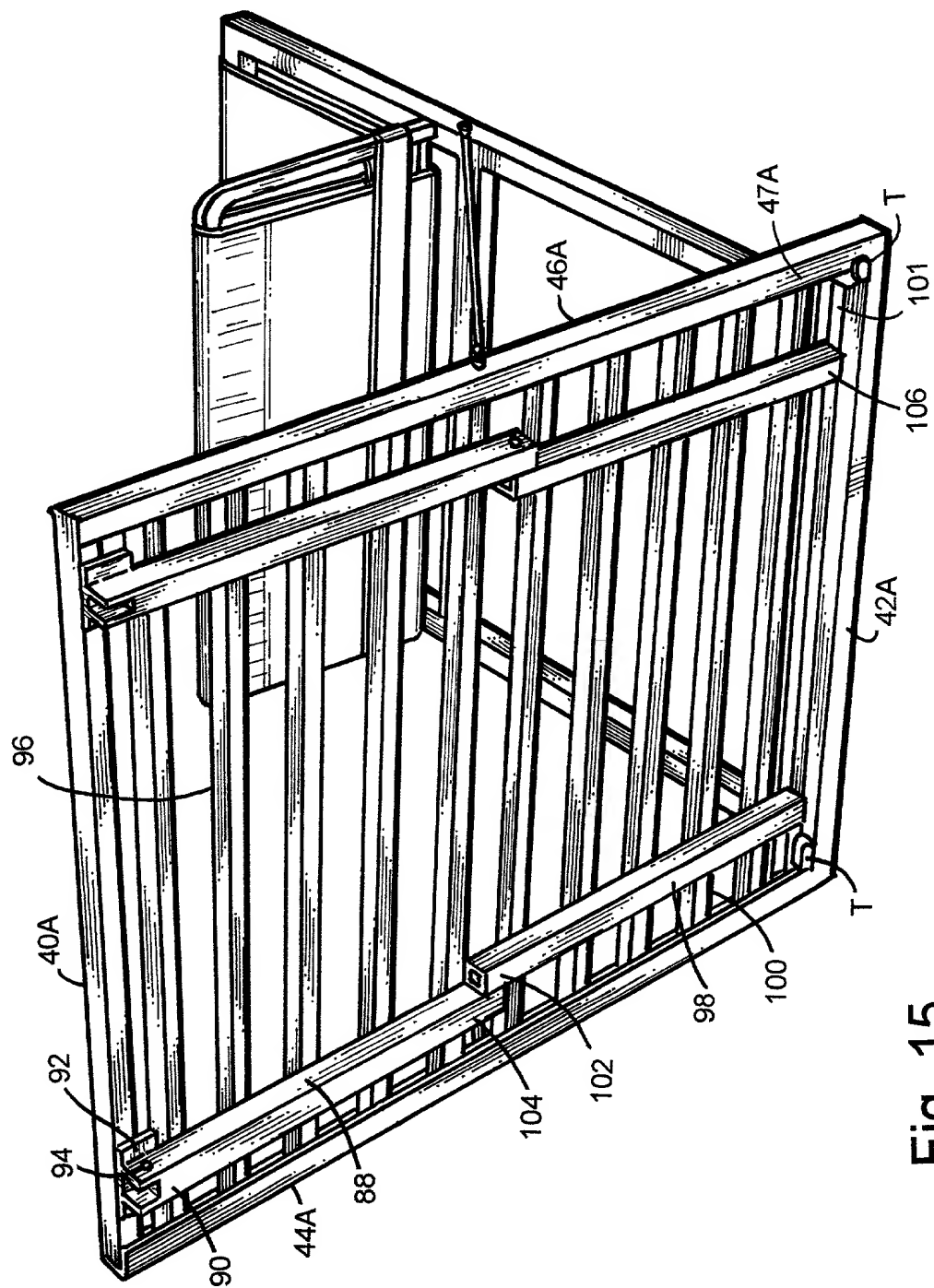


Fig. 15

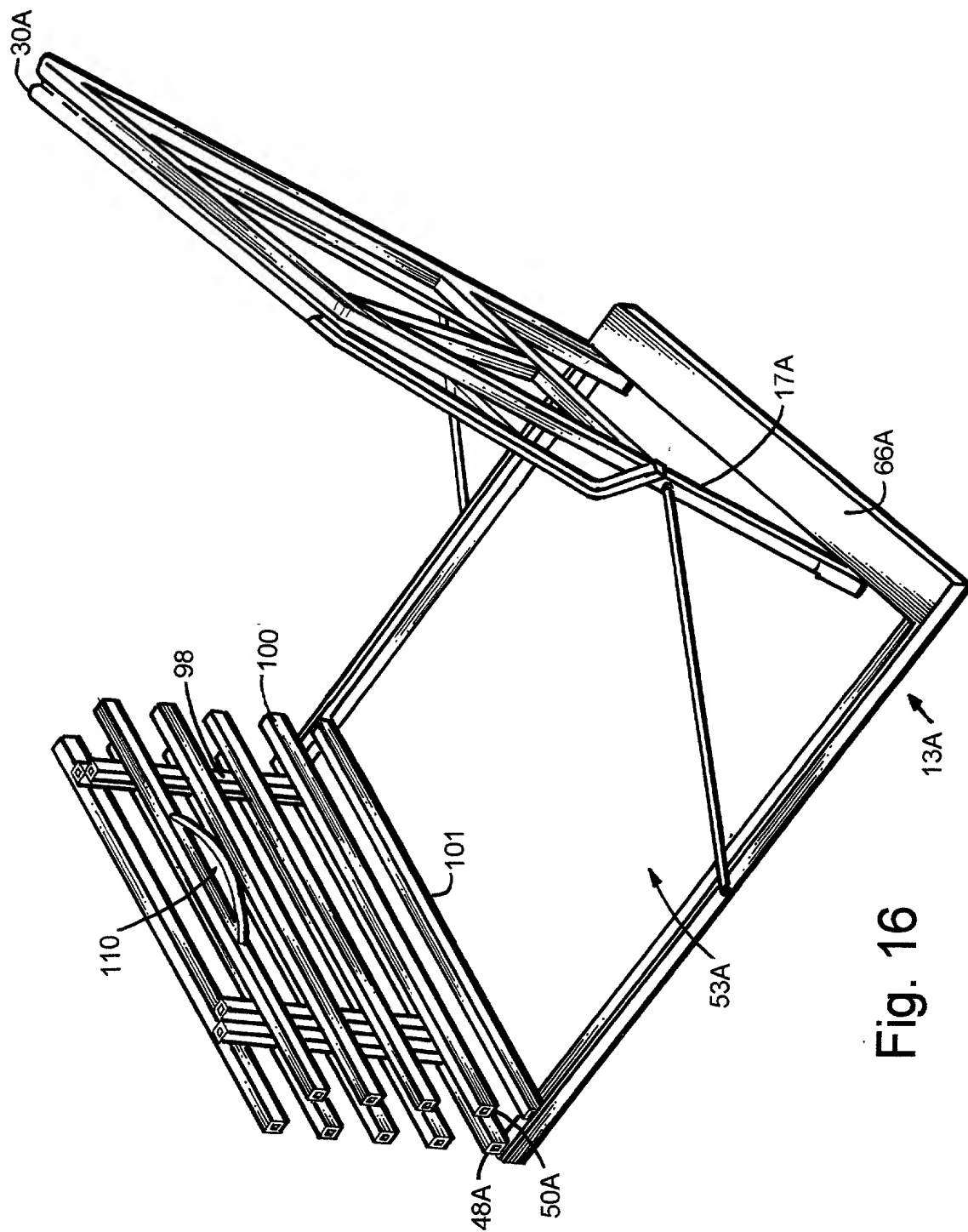


Fig. 16

DECLARATION, PETITION AND POWER OF
ATTORNEY FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled TREE STAND, the specification of which

 X is attached hereto
 was filed on as
Application Serial No.
and was amended on .

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed: X None

Prior Foreign Application(s)			<u>Priority Claimed</u>	
<u> </u> (Number)	<u> </u> (Country)	<u> </u> (Day/Mon/Yr filed)	<u> </u> Yes	<u> </u> No
<u> </u> (Number)	<u> </u> (Country)	<u> </u> (Day/Mon/Yr filed)	<u> </u> Yes	<u> </u> No
<u> </u> (Number)	<u> </u> (Country)	<u> </u> (Day/Mon/Yr filed)	<u> </u> Yes	<u> </u> No

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

00640557 081200

(Application Serial No.) (Filing Date) (Status)
(patented __, pending __,
abandoned __)

(Application Serial No.) (Filing Date) (Status)
(patented __, pending __,
abandoned __)

Your petitioner, CLIFFORD BRAUN, a citizen of the United States of America and a resident of 8462 Section Line Road, Harbor Beach, Michigan, 48441 whose post office address is 8462 Section Line Road, Harbor Beach, Michigan, 48441, prays that Letter Patent may be granted to him for the invention or discovery described and claimed in the accompanying specification and claims.

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint John J. Swartz, 908 Court Street, Saginaw, Michigan, 48602, Registration No. 24,626, my attorney to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of sole or first inventor: CLIFFORD BRAUN

Inventor's signature: *Clifford Braun* Date: 8-7-00

Residence: 8462 Section Line Road, Harbor Beach MI 48441

Citizenship: USA

Post Office Address: 8462 Section Line Road, Harbor Beach MI 48441

Full name of sole or first inventor: DEREK WOODKE

Inventor's signature: *Derek Woodke* Date: 8-7-00

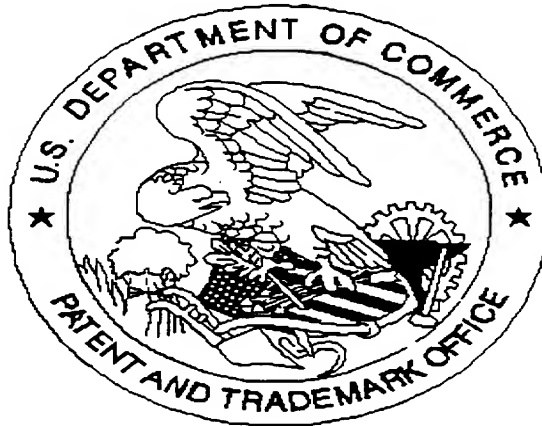
Residence: 8271 JENKS ROAD, HARBOR BEACH, MICHIGAN 48441

Citizenship: USA

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